Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development

Annual Report 2009-2010

Prince Edward Island
CANADA

CONTENTS

MINISTER'S LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL 1

DEPUTY MINISTER'S OVERVIEW 2

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 3

2009/2010 EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES 4

MANDATE AND STRUCTURE 5

FISHERY SPECIES LANDINGS AND VALUES 6

MARINE FISHERIES AND SEAFOOD SERVICES DIVISION 7

AQUACULTURE DIVISION 19

RURAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION 29

ACCESS PEI 32

MINISTER'S LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To the Honourable Barbara Hagerman
Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island

Madam:

I have the honour to submit herewith the Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2010.

I have the honour to be, Madam,
Your obedient servant,

Honorable Barbara Hagerman
Lieutenante-gouverneur de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

Votre Honneur,

J'ai l'honneur de soumettre sous ce pli le rapport annuel du ministère des Pêches et de l'Aquaculture pour l'année financière se terminant le 31 mars 2010.

Respectueusement soumis,

Neil J. LeClair
Minister of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development

DEPUTY MINISTER'S OVERVIEW

To the Honourable Neil J. LeClair
Minister of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development

Dear Minister:

It is my pleasure to present the 2009-2010 Annual Report for the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development. This report provides an overview of the work completed by department staff over the period April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010.

The fiscal year was a landmark year for the department, highlighted by the permanent relocation of the department to Montague in January, 2010. A number of initiatives were announced during the year that have been unprecedented in the province, including the Five Point Lobster Plan to address constraints in the lobster fishery due to the global economic recession and the Rural Action Plan, a rural economic development strategy for Prince Edward Island.

It is my pleasure to serve as Deputy Minister for the department responsible for implementing programs and services to our wide range of clients including fishers, aquaculturists, seafood processors, community groups, municipalities, economic development organizations and all those Islanders who use the services of Access PEI.

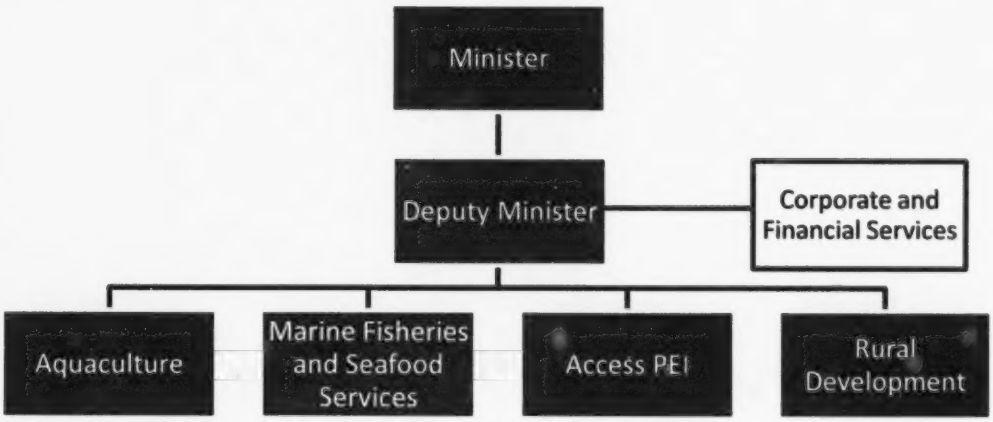
A strategic planning process was initiated in March 2010 which will result in a renewed focus for the work of the department's employees in order to deliver the best programs and services possible to clients.

The department remains committed to its mandate located at its new rural headquarters. I wish to acknowledge the dedicated employees of the department who remain committed to delivering quality programs and services.

Richard Gallant,
Deputy Minister

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

**Department of Fisheries,
Aquaculture and Rural Development**



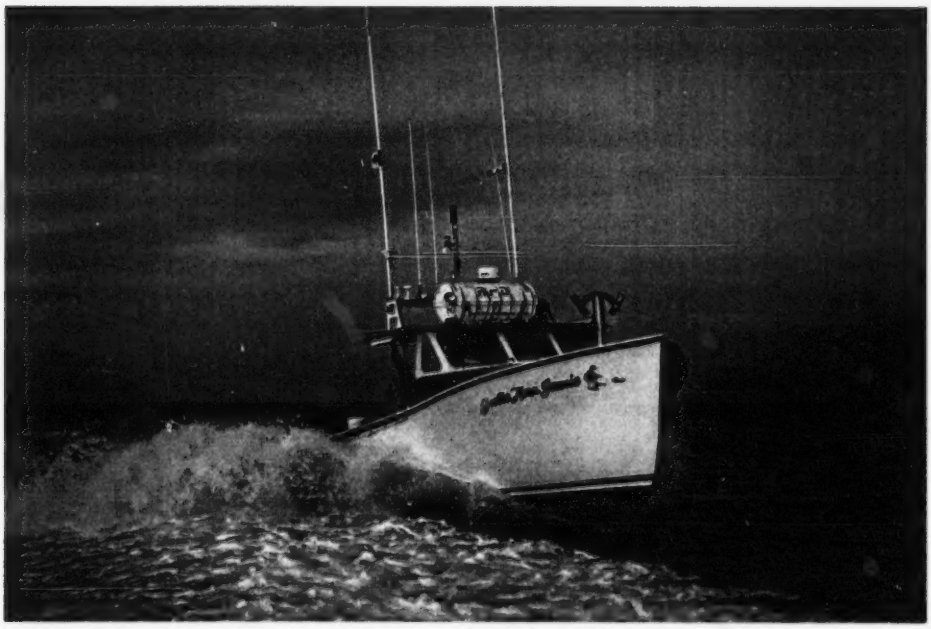
2009/2010 EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

EXPENDITURE BUDGET	Original	Revised	Actual
Department Management	$599,900	$716,300	$720,168
Marine Fisheries and Seafood Services	$1,406,500	$1,432,500	$1,522,180
Aquaculture	$1,292,200	$1,452,200	$1,396,988
Access PEI	$2,778,300	$2,671,200	$2,506,712
Community Development	$1,744,200	$1,773,900	$1,837,160
Total Expenditures	**$7,821,100**	**$8,046,100**	**$7,983,208**

REVENUE BUDGET	Original	Revised	Actual
Department Revenue	$45,000	$145,000	$163,357
Total Revenues	**$45,000**	**$145,000**	**$163,357**

TOTAL NET	$7,776,100	$7,901,100	$7,819,851

(Based on Financial Reports of July 31, 2010)



MANDATE AND STRUCTURE

The Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development contributes to the growth of sustainable, prosperous fishing, aquaculture and seafood processing enterprises and provides policy leadership in developing new approaches to community development, service delivery and employment programs, the majority of which are rural based. The Department consists of four divisions: Marine Fisheries and Seafood Services, Aquaculture, Rural Development and Access PEI.

The **Marine Fisheries and Seafood Services Division** acts as an advocate for the Prince Edward Island fishing industry and takes part in many species advisory committees with the industry and the federal government, which manages marine fisheries resources. The Marine Fisheries Section carries out applied biological research in support of major fish species such as lobster, as well as developmental or emerging species. The Seafood Services Section promotes fish quality through the administration of the *Prince Edward Island Fish Inspection Act* and the *Prince Edward Island Fisheries Act*, which includes responsibility for licensing and inspection of all fish-buying stations and fish-processing facilities in the province.

The **Aquaculture Division** provides programming to support the growth and sustainability of aquaculture businesses. Aquaculture continues to make a strong contribution to the fishery and remains a sector with potential for further growth and increased economic returns. As well, assistance is provided to encourage new technology in aquaculture, and research is carried out on species that offer potential for culture. Department staff offer expertise in all facets of aquaculture production and provide essential technical and biological services to the industry.

The **Rural Development Division** mandate provides leadership in developing new approaches to rural community development and delivers employment programs under the Employment Development Agency.

Access PEI provides quality, efficient, provincial government services to all Islanders through single window access to government programs, services and information at eight locations across the province.

The department receives financial, human resource, administrative and communications support through a shared services agreement with the Department of Agriculture's **Corporate and Financial Services Division**.

Financial and administrative services provided include; budget preparation, financial reporting and quarterly forecasting, accounts receivable, accounts payable and fleet management. Human resources services include human resource planning, payroll and staffing. Communication services include preparation of press releases, advertisements and other communication activities.

FISHERY SPECIES LANDINGS AND VALUES

2008		
MOLLUSCS AND CRUSTACEANS	**WEIGHT (LBS)**	**VALUE ($000)**
Lobster	21,902,342	100,740
Snow Crab	5,815,670	11,633
Rock Crab	4,957,475	1,854
Spider Crab	116,411	46
Bar Clams	806,858	323
Quahaugs	860,259	593
Mussels	37,301,880	22,381
Oysters	5,653,918	5,654
Scallops (shucked)	100,097	780
Soft Shell Clams	690,841	692
Whelks	0	0
TOTAL	**78,205,751**	**144,696**
PELAGICS AND ESTUARIAL	**WEIGHT (LBS)**	**VALUE ($000)**
Bluefin Tuna	311,869	3,119
Mackerel	3,296,381	1,179
Herring	27,326,820	2,976
Gaspereaux	277,553	134
Eels	102,651	196
Smelts	90,084	36
Silversides	940,190	390
Cultured finfish	9,000	1,624
TOTAL	**32,354,548**	**9,654**
GROUNDFISH	**WEIGHT (LBS)**	**VALUE ($000)**
Cod	236,699	159
Hake	146	0
Flounder	125,830	62
Winter Flounder	151,376	133
Yellowtail	496	0
Tomcod	0	0
Halibut	17,035	57
Other Groundfish	2,865	0
TOTAL	**534,447**	**411**
SEAPLANTS	**WEIGHT (LBS)**	**VALUE ($000)**
Furcellaria	808,223	79
Irish Moss	2,796,528	336
TOTAL	**3,604,751**	**415**
TOTAL FISHERY	**114,699,497**	**155,176**

2009		
MOLLUSCS AND CRUSTACEANS	**WEIGHT (LBS)**	**VALUE ($000)**
Lobster	22,939,121	71,895
Snow Crab	4,332,516	7,585
Rock Crab	4,527,709	1,712
Spider Crab	0	0
Bar Clams	878,981	433
Quahaugs	935,151	880
Mussels	41,091,361	24,655
Oysters	5,028,503	5,075
Scallops (shucked)	120,261	694
Soft Shell Clams	591,532	688
Whelks	259	0
TOTAL	**80,445,394**	**113,617**
PELAGICS AND ESTUARIAL	**WEIGHT (LBS)**	**VALUE ($000)**
Bluefin Tuna	380,995	2,152
Mackerel	5,343,549	1,817
Herring	30,255,752	3,738
Gaspereaux	373,373	189
Eels	87,840	150
Smelts	117,677	48
Silversides	1,010,818	538
Cultured finfish	0	1,828
TOTAL	**37,570,004**	**10,460**
GROUNDFISH	**WEIGHT (LBS)**	**VALUE ($000)**
Cod	31,223	19
Hake	1,837	1
Flounder	108,444	86
Winter Flounder	59,752	56
Yellowtail	0	0
Tomcod	1,511	0
Halibut	40,225	146
Other Groundfish	1,364	1
TOTAL	**244,356**	**309**
SEAPLANTS	**WEIGHT (LBS)**	**VALUE ($000)**
Furcellaria	750,000	75
Irish Moss	700,000	301
TOTAL	**1,450,000**	**376**
TOTAL FISHERY	**119,709,754**	**124,762**

MARINE FISHERIES AND SEAFOOD SERVICES DIVISION

The division's mission is to provide quality advice, assistance and information to clients, as well as advocate on behalf of the marine fisheries industry with the goal to support the development of the fishing industry in a sustainable manner.

Marine Fisheries Section

The main role of the Marine Fisheries Section is to represent the interests of Prince Edward Island within the federal advisory committee process and to assist the Island fishing industry to represent its views fairly and fully.

Lobster Resource Monitoring Program

The Lobster Resource Monitoring Program collects data on the Island's lobster resource through volunteer index fishermen recording daily information in logbooks. Sea-sampling also took place with department staff collecting information on board commercial fishing vessels. The Lobster Resource Monitoring Program was enhanced with the addition of a new Fisheries Technician staff position.

Lobster Research

In 2009, during at-sea sampling, staff continued with the tagging of female lobsters that were returned to the water during the commercial fishery as required by the prohibited size range (115-129 mm) set out in the 2009 management plan. The recapture of these lobsters during subsequent fishing activity will provide a better understanding of the movement of these lobsters.

A collaborative project involving the department, Fisheries and Oceans Canada Science Branch, and members of the Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association, saw 180 lobster larval collectors placed in six locations in 2009. The locations were in waters adjacent to Skinners Pond, Northport, Covehead, Fortune, Murray River and Nine Mile Creek. These collectors provided suitable habitat for lobster larvae to settle with the hope that a settlement index may be developed for each location over time.

The department, Fisheries and Oceans Canada Science Branch, and the Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association also initiated a two-year project to investigate the performance of several biodegradable components for lobster traps that would ensure lost fishing gear does not continue to catch lobster.

The department continued its financial support to the Atlantic Veterinary College's Lobster Science Centre. It also contributed to the centre's Atlantic Lobster Molt and Quality Project.

Electronic Data Collection System Pilot Project for the Lobster Fishery

A pilot project to investigate the potential use of an electronic data collection system to replace the current paper landings slips in the Prince Edward Island lobster fishery was carried out again in Prince Edward Island in 2009. The project was a collaboration between the department, Fisheries and Oceans Canada - Gulf Region Lobster Group and members of the Prince Edward Island Seafood Processors Association, and is in response to a need for lobster landings and effort data to be collected in a timely manner.

Lobster Management

The 2009 lobster management plan for the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence, including LFAs 24 and 26A, was a rollover of the 2008 plan. The management plan measures were maintained for the 2009 season, which were a minimum legal carapace size of 70 mm and the prohibited size range of 115 to 129 mm whereby all female lobsters in that range were to be returned to the water. At the request of LFA 26A fishers on Prince Edward Island, a requirement for fishers to string a minimum of six lobster traps per line was granted an extension in 2009 after its implementation in 2007. This measure is only for a portion of water adjacent to Prince Edward Island in LFA 26A.

The 2009 lobster fishery management plan for LFA 25 was the same as 2008. The plan included a minimum legal carapace size of 70 mm, a maximum size of 114 mm for females, a mandatory height of 40 mm for escape mechanisms required on traps, a maximum size for entrance hoops in traps was a diameter of 152 mm, and the possession of lobster and fishing gear was prohibited between 9:00 p.m. and one hour before sunrise.

Five-Point Marketing Plan for Lobster

The department announced a new five-point plan in May of 2009, aimed at stabilizing the lobster industry and expanding markets for lobster products. The plan represents an $8 million commitment to this key rural sector and was developed in consultation with the federal government and the industry to address the challenges facing the lobster fishery. Highlights of the plan included:

1. Funding to purchase lobster to be held in live holding systems until it can be processed in an orderly manner.
2. The low interest loan program was extended.
3. Agreement was sought with federal government partners on a $4 million product development and marketing fund.
4. Agreement was sought for industry rationalization in Lobster Fishing Area 25 and 26A.
5. Promote the flexibility in the Employment Insurance Program to respond to the crisis in the industry.

Community Adjustment Fund Support to Atlantic Canada Lobster Sector

The federal government announced in May of 2009 that $10 million would directed from the Community Adjustment Fund to improve marketing, assist in innovation, and develop products and technologies for the lobster industries in Atlantic Canada and Quebec. The funding would be provided through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency for the marketing and promotion of lobster.

Federal Funding for the Lobster Industry

On June 10, 2009, Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada announced that the federal government would make a five year, $65 million investment to assist lobster fishers throughout Atlantic Canada and Quebec to adjust to the collapse in lobster prices caused by the global recession, while building a more sustainable lobster fishery for future seasons.

These measures included the following:

- Up to $35 million over five years for Atlantic Lobster Sustainability Measures. These measures would help the industry improve its sustainability by enhancing conservation and self-adjustment measures being implemented from within the sector. This funding will also help the Atlantic lobster fishery meet eco-certification requirements.

- Up to $15 million over five years for Atlantic Lobster Sustainability Measures for low income areas. These measures were targeted at lobster-dependent fishers and their associations who experienced low landings and a corresponding drop in income from lobster.
- Up to $15 million in short-term transitional contributions for lobster harvesters who experienced a significant drop in income from lobster harvesting in 2009.

The department provided a $480,000 loan to the Prince County Fishermen's Association to bank 24 licences for the 2009 lobster fishing season in LFA 25. The department, in conjunction with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency provided funds to the Prince County Fishermen's Association and the LFA 26A Restructuring Inc., to assist in the development of sustainability plans for their lobster fishing areas.

Prince Edward Island Lobster Industry Roundtable

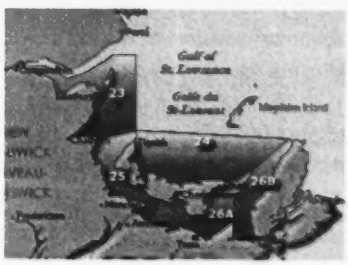
The Prince Edward Island Lobster Industry Roundtable continued in 2009. The Roundtable, made up of representatives of the Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association, Prince Edward Island Seafood Processors Association, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Mi'Kmaq Confederacy of PEI and several independent lobster fishermen and processors ensured that the views and concerns of the Prince Edward Island lobster industry remain the focus of policy discussions and decision making of the provincial government.

Future Fisher Program

The department recognized the need to help young fishers seeking to enter the lobster industry. The Future Fisher Program was launched with a $100,000 investment from the department for 2009-2010. In its first year, the program assisted twenty-five new entrants to the fishery with services ranging from mentoring and training to interest relief.

Lobster Landings

Catches for the 2009 season were approximately 14 million pounds in LFA 24; 5 million pounds in LFA 26A; 3.4 million pounds for LFA 25, for a total of 22.4 million pounds. The landings in 2009 were higher than the 2008 landings of 21.9 million pounds.



Lobster continues to be the primary economic driver of the Island's fishing industry with a landed value normally in excess of $100 million.

Toad Crab

In 2009, eleven commercial licence holders were eligible to fish in the sub-zone from Covehead Harbour to East Point. The management measures for 2009 included a season of July 10 to September 26 and a minimum carapace size of 60 mm. However, due to poor market demand and the high cost of fishing, there were no toad crab landings in 2009.

Rock Crab

2009 landings of rock crab were approximately 2,054 metric tonnes with a landed value of $1.7 million. These landings included crab landed in the directed rock crab fishery and crab retained as a by-catch during the lobster fishery. The range in price for rock crab was $0.25 - $0.45 per pound.

Fishermen remain concerned with Fisheries and Oceans Canada's removal of conditions previously in place to control the retention of rock crab during the lobster fishery. Fishers were concerned over the amount and size of rock crab landed as by-catch and would like to see a return of the conditions for daily limits, and minimum legal sizes. The department will continue to support fishers in their effort to resolve this issue.

There were forty-three Prince Edward Island rock crab fisher licences and two First Nations allocations in Area 26A. Each licence is allowed a quota of 24 metric tonnes. The 2009 fishery opened on August 3 and closed on November 28, and Prince Edward Island fishermen landed 923 metric tonnes.

In Area 25, the first season began on June 27 and ended July 25 while the second season began on October 15 and ended on November 27. There were twenty-three Prince Edward Island licence holders and three First Nations allocations. Each Prince Edward Island fisher had a quota of 25 metric tonnes. The landing in this area for Prince Edward Island in 2009 was 676 metric tonnes.

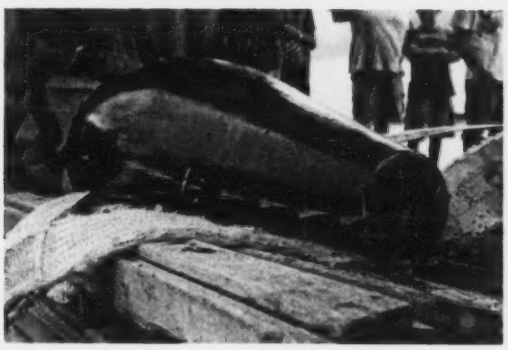
Area 24 had sixteen fishers with permits, one licence holder and five First Nations participants. There was no individual or overall quota in this area and landings in 2009 were 161 metric tonnes.

Bluefin Tuna

For the 2009 bluefin tuna season, the Prince Edward Island tuna industry had 138.77 metric tonne of the Canadian inshore bluefin tuna quota. The early season began on August 3 with 40 metric tonnes allotted. After four days, the Prince Edward Island tuna fishermen landed 38.66 metric tonnes (134 fish) and the season was closed until the fall.

The late season opened on October 10 and closed on October 16. Over 115 fish were landed on the first day, with an additional 50 fish landed on the second day, for a total of 56.2 metric tonnes. There were 287 Prince Edward Island tuna fishers who participated in the 2009 fishery.

Final figures showed a total of 146.41 metric tonnes landed. The fleet had an overrun of 7.64 metric tonnes. As per Fisheries and Oceans Canada's tuna management plan, on October 20, any unused quota from the inshore fleets was to be redistributed. Prince Edward Island received approximately 12 metric tonne; however, with the overrun deducted, the quota amounted to approximately 4.5 metric tonnes. The Prince Edward Island Tuna Advisory Board unanimously agreed to roll-over this quota for the 2010 season.



Tuna Landings by Port - 2009 Season	
North Lake	103
North Rustico	42
Tignish	18
Sea Cow Pond	9
Naufrage	44
Newport	2
Red Head	16
Souris	86
Tracadie	9
Savage Harbour	11
Machon's Point	28
TOTAL	**368**
Average round weight = 666 pounds	

Source: Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development

International Bluefin Tuna Trade

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) is responsible for the conservation of tunas and tuna-like species in the Atlantic Ocean. This organization sets the quota levels for both the western bluefin tuna and the larger eastern/ Mediterranean tuna stocks.

ICCAT met in mid-November 2008 in Madrid, Spain. The outcome of this meeting determined Canada's allocation for the next several years. Canada's quota for 2008 was 546 metric tonnes and 494 metric tonnes for 2009. In 2010, Canada's quota is initially set at 468 metric tonnes.

ICCAT met in mid-November 2009 in Brazil. Prince Edward Island was represented by Doug Fraser, Walter Bruce and Ken Drake of the Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association Tuna Advisory Board. The meeting focused on the management of key stocks such as Atlantic bluefin tuna, Atlantic swordfish, northern Atlantic albacore tuna, and several by-catch species. ICCAT took crucial steps to tighten monitoring and control measures for bluefin tuna fisheries.

ICCAT has been strongly criticized by environmental groups for not reducing the catch levels to a sustainable amount as determined by their own scientists. In the past year, the media hype has resulted in Monaco proposing to list bluefin tuna on the endangered list on the international body, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITIES).

CITES met in March 2010 to review over 40 separate requests on species to be listed. The proposed listing for bluefin tuna as endangered, would have prohibited international trade of the product. Canada and Japan were among many nations which opposed the motion, which was ultimately defeated.

Premier's Tuna Cup Award

Eric MacKinnon, a tuna fisher from Murray River who fishes out of Beach Point, was recognized for landing the largest bluefin tuna of the 2009 season at a Prince Edward Island port. Mr. MacKinnon was presented with the Premier's Cup on December 16, 2009 by Premier Robert Ghiz. The cup is awarded annually to recognize the importance of the tuna fishery to the economy and the international recognition it brings to Prince Edward Island.

The 1,162 pound tuna was landed on October 10, the opening day of the fall season, aboard the vessel Pier Pressure I.

4T Cod Fishery

From September 23-25, 88 Prince Edward Island fishers directed for a provincial quota of 78 metric tonnes of cod. The final landings recorded were over 91 metric tonnes caught. Landings were positive along the north side of the Island, with many fishers opting to retain their catch and to work together to reduce costs and share expenses. Some vessels landed over 2,000 pounds each day.

Charter Boat Fishery

Charter boat fishers were able to retain cod in 2009. There were 15 active charter boats operating out of six harbours, which required dockside monitoring. A total of approximately 12,500 pounds of cod were landed in July, August and September from these vessels. These fishers had to acquire quota from an individual transferrable quota entity in order to participate in the charter boat fishery.

4RST Atlantic Halibut

On September 2, 2009 Prince Edward Island had a one day halibut fishery for 54 active fishers. A total of 18,025 kilograms were landed from a quota of 18,500 kilograms. Landings varied from only seven kilograms to over 2,600 kilograms per vessel. The average landing was 337 kilograms (741 pounds).

Spring Herring

On April 30, the spring herring fishery was temporarily closed for Herring Fishing Area 16E (Western Prince Edward Island and South East New Brunswick), when the quota of 605 metric tonnes was reached. Prince Edward Island fishers caught 366 metric tonnes with their New Brunswick counterparts landing 319 metric tonnes. Fisheries and Ocean Canada also transferred 100 metric tonnes from the "June reserve" for this area.

Prince Edward Island herring fishermen were frequently catching their individual weekly quota of 22,250 pounds in one night. Prices started strong, however, as supply increased, the price fell to $0.10 - $0.15 per pound.

Herring Fishing Area 16E received an additional 110 metric tonnes which began on May 3. The total landings for this area were 892 metric tonnes with Prince Edward Island landing 535 metric tonnes. The total inshore landings were 1,238 metric tonnes from an overall quota of 2,500 metric tonnes.

Fall Herring

The overall fall quota was reduced slightly from 68,800 metric tonnes to 65,000 metric tonnes. The Prince Edward Island herring fishery takes place in two main areas; off North Cape in Herring Fishing Area (LFA) 16E, and Fishermen's Bank, in LFA 16G. Each LFA has its own quota and the fishers set the season. LFA 16G (Fishermen's Bank) had a quota of 8,508 metric tonnes, with 756 metric tonnes

assigned for the north side and 472 metric tonnes assigned for an early fishery in July for the south side. Only 159 metric tonnes were landed in the early season on the north side, and 468 metric tonnes on the south side. This area was closed on August 5. The roe fishery opened on August 23 and closed on September 14 with 7,837 metric tonnes landed.

Western Prince Edward Island (LFA 16E) fishers had a quota of 8,692 metric tonnes, with 3,192 metric tonnes being allocated as an open, competitive quota for all fishers. The remaining 5,000 metric tonnes were split evenly between New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. This arrangement allowed each area to set their respective opening dates. Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick herring fishers set their respective opening date on August 23. Western Prince Edward Island fishers had daily quotas of 20,000 pounds. The total landing for LFA 16E was 8,539 metric tonnes.

The department financially supported acoustic industry surveys in the two main fishing areas.

Mackerel

The mackerel season opened one week early, beginning on May 25 as a result of a request by the Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association to assist in the bait requirements for the spring lobster fishers.

Eels

The eel season began on August 16. There were two buyers offering prices of $1.85 and $2.00 per pound. There was a small market for product in Toronto. Fishermen still had problems with green crab being caught in their traps as well as a by-catch of winter flounder in some waters.

Furcellaria Project

At the request of industry, the department agreed to finance a furcellaria raking project for eligible seaplant harvesters in western Prince Edward Island. This marked the second consecutive year for this initiative. The two furcellaria buyers were Oceanside Seaweeds Ltd. and Maritime Sea Products Ltd. Fifteen non-core seaplant licence holders participated in the project for a three-week period in September. The department sent samples to Chile, Denmark, and Maine as part of an ongoing process to develop new opportunities for the industry.

Whelks

A new emerging fishery began in 2009 with 12 whelk permits being issued across the Island to explore the feasibility of a sustainable and viable fishery in the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. The lateness of the inaugural season proved a factor in maximizing effort and scientific data collection. Full dockside monitoring and at-sea observer coverage was a requirement under the exploratory fishery policy.

Gulf Shrimp

For the past number of years Prince Edward Island received a temporary allocation of Gulf Shrimp in the amount of approximately 213 metric tonnes. The shrimp is located in three areas: Seven Islands, Anticosti and Esquiman off the coast of Quebec. In 2009, Fisheries and Oceans Canada increased the Gulf Shrimp total allowable catch and allocated 426 metric tonnes (1.15 percent) of the total allowable catch on a permanent basis to both Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. While this amount is almost double that of previous years, it remains short of the 1,000 metric tonnes requested by the Prince Edward Island government and Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association at the annual Shrimp Advisory meeting held in Quebec.

Northern Shrimp

The 2009 total allowable catch had increased from 2008 to approximately 35,000 metric tonnes. Canada received 83 percent of the 3L quota. Since 2000, Prince Edward Island had been awarded a temporary allocation in 3L of 1,500 metric tonnes. The Prince Edward Island Atlantic Shrimp Corporation signed a multi-year agreement with Ocean Choice International in 2005 to fish the Prince Edward Island shrimp allocation. Proceeds are invested in projects that involve harvesters, processors and the Lobster Science Centre. For more information on the Atlantic Shrimp Corporation, please visit: www.princeedwardislandshrimp.com .

Seafood Services Section

Staff of the Seafood Services Section provide advice and assistance to clients regarding maintenance of fish quality and production of quality seafood products. The section administers regulations under the *Prince Edward Island Fisheries Act* and the *Prince Edward Island Fish Inspection Act*. The section is also responsible for gathering, compiling and publishing fisheries information including statistical data relating to the maintenance and development of fishery resources.

The section also delivers development projects for the improvement of fishing ports and shellfish landing sites under provincial jurisdiction.

Licencing

The Seafood Services Section is responsible for the administration of licences pertaining to processing, buying and peddling under the *Prince Edward Island Fisheries Act Regulations.* Fish processing licences are divided into four categories: primary processing, secondary processing, lobster cookroom (limited to 144 square feet of processing area) and groundfish processing (limited to 750 square feet of processing area). In 2009, the department issued 51 primary processing licences, three secondary processing licences, 17 lobster cookroom licences and six groundfish processing licences.

Fish buying licences are issued on a species-per-buying-station basis. The six categories are lobster, other crustaceans, groundfish, pelagic, molluscs and other fish. During 2009, the department issued 138 spring and 34 fall lobster buying licences, 88 other crustaceans, 53 groundfish, 114 pelagic, 121 mollusc and seven other licences.

In addition, 65 fish peddling licences were issued to individuals and/or companies who peddle fish to consumers throughout Prince Edward Island.

Two fisheries inspection officers were responsible for enforcing regulations under the *Prince Edward Island Fish Inspection Act* and the *Prince Edward Island Fisheries Act.*

Prince Edward Island Seafood Processing Projects

The department partnered with the Prince Edward Island Atlantic Shrimp Corporation and the Prince Edward Island Seafood Processors Association to carry out a number of projects to enhance the processing industry on Prince Edward Island including: training needs analysis, traceability, prevention strategies in the control of listeria and a recruitment video for the seafood processing industry.

Dead Mammal Disposal

The Seafood Services Section is responsible for coordination of the removal of dead marine mammals that land on Island beaches throughout the year. The majority of these mammals are examined either in the field by personnel from the Atlantic Veterinary College, or in some cases, the carcasses are transported to the Atlantic Veterinary College for post mortem examination.

Staff worked closely with Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers of the Department of Environment, Energy and Forestry in the disposal of carcasses. The cost for disposal of dead mammals is the responsibility of the department and the amount depends on the size, location and condition of the carcass.

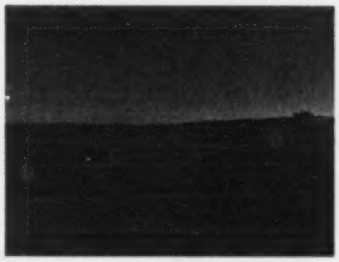
Environment officials approve locations for burial of dead carcasses and a local contractor or individual carries out the work of disposal. The Seafood Services Section coordinated the removal of approximately 25 seals and dolphins and two whales during 2009-2010.

Shellfish Landing Sites

The Seafood Services Section is responsible for the maintenance of approximately 50 shellfish landing sites in various rivers and bays throughout the province. There are continuous erosion problems on the coastline and contractors are hired periodically to provide gravel and shale in order to ensure that shellfishers have access to rivers and bays. The division carried out major work at Duffy Road, York Point and Grand River.

Duffy Road in Stratford

The Mason Road in Stratford has been a popular launching and landing site for shellfishers from the Hillsborough River for over 20 years. As a result of more homes being constructed along the road, coupled with additional fishers using the launching site, congestion of traffic has been increasing each year.



Over the past four years, the department has been actively trying to find an alternate shore access site in this area. Finding suitable land for parking on a road that has good shore access has been a challenge. However, in the fall of 2009, the department was able to lease an acre of land at the end of Duffy Road which is suitable for hauling boats off the shore. A contractor was hired, and a parking area was constructed that can park in excess of approximately 40 trucks and trailers. Both fishermen and local residents were pleased with the final result.

York Point

The land at the end of the Wharf Road, which is owned by government, and leading out to York Point has been a shellfish launching and landing site for a number of years. Until 2007, the land was an area used by fishermen (primarily from Prince County) to place their trailers during the spring and fall oyster fishing seasons.

Acting on a recommendation from the "2000 Consultant Study on Shore Access Sites and Trailer Parks", conducted on behalf of government and the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association, the trailer park was decommissioned (no overnight trailers).

The land was designated for day-fisher parking only. In the fall of 2009 the area was graded and covered with a shale base and topped off with asphalt millings. This land now provides a well-surfaced area to park approximately 25 trucks and trailers.

Grand River
The slipway and landing site at Grand River, situated adjacently to the bridge, provides an essential access site for shellfishers in the area. In 2009, the department expanded and upgraded the parking area to eliminate truck and trailers parking along the busy highway which created a traffic hazard. The slipway was constructed 15 years ago and has endured heavy usage over this time period and has encountered many tidal surges and damage caused by storms and ice, resulting in the breakage and dislodgement of concrete slabs.

In the fall of 2009, the department hired a contractor to widen and lengthen the slipway which resulted in a more workable slipway for oyster and mussel fishers to launch their boats.

Seafood Market Initiatives

Seafood Market Information Officer
This was a new position in the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development which began in June 2009. The purpose of the position is to provide the department and the Prince Edward Island seafood industry with current seafood market related data and explore opportunities for new seafood markets. The data will be used by the Prince Edward Island seafood industry to assess its position relative to the marketplace. The Seafood Market Information Officer also serves as a liaison between other departments and industry stakeholders, pertaining to seafood marketing.

Incoming Seafood Buyers Missions
The department, in collaboration with Innovation PEI as well as Agriculture and Agrifood Canada, participated in seafood buyer missions, hosting delegations from China and the USA. The department also worked with Innovation PEI to coordinate a buyers program to coincide with the PEI International Shellfish Festival.

Atlantic Canada Lobster Four-City Promotion Campaign
The department, in collaboration with Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Quebec, participated in a Canadian promotion in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, and Toronto. This initiative, coordinated by the Prince Edward Island Seafood Processers Association, was designed to reach consumers via media coverage of strategic events in these four cities.

China Lobster Market Development
The department participated in a joint market development initiative with Innovation PEI and the New Brunswick Department of Fisheries. A Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick contingent travelled to China in the fall of 2009, promoting the development of a frozen lobster market in selected locations in China. The cities selected were Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Qingdao. In addition, the group participated in the 2009 China Fisheries and Seafood Expo in Qingdao, the largest seafood show in Asia.

International Boston Seafood Show
Minister Neil LeClair led a delegation of Prince Edward Island seafood businesses, trade officials and industry stakeholders to the International Boston Seafood Show from March 14 -16, 2010. The show is

the largest seafood exposition in North America, attracting around 18,000 buyers and sellers from around the world.

The Boston Seafood Show represents an outstanding opportunity to showcase the high quality and value of Prince Edward Island's seafood products, connect with existing customers and develop new and expanded markets.

Seafood Promotion

Prince Edward Island International Shellfish Festival

The department once again sponsored and was actively involved with the organization of another very successful Prince Edward Island International Shellfish Festival held September 18-20. The festival was co-hosted by the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association and the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance. The PEI International Shellfish Festival has grown into one of the largest promotions of shellfish in Eastern Canada.

Minister's Shellfish Recognition Award

Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development Minister Neil LeClair presented the 2009 Provincial Minister's Shellfish Recognition Awards to two leading members of the shellfish industry. Dennis Enman of Coleman and Carl Reynolds of Stratford were presented the awards during the opening of the Prince Edward Island International Shellfish Festival in Charlottetown. The shellfish recognition awards are presented annually to individuals for their success and leadership in shellfish harvesting, culture, processing or marketing.

Linking Land and Sea

The department participated in the Linking Land and Sea summer program in cooperation with the Prince Edward Island Association of Exhibitions. The program promoted seafood by showing various ways that seafood can be prepared. These promotions took place at various events such as Old Home Week, the Summerside Lobster Carnival, the Northumberland Fisheries Festival and the Tyne Valley Oyster Festival.

Out of the Sea and Over the Coals

The department's seafood promotion program, Out of the Sea and Over the Coals, had another successful summer in 2009. This program has been in operation for over twenty years, bringing the sizzling taste of seafood from the barbecue to thousands of people, visitors and Islanders. In 2009, the program hosted over fifty events at exhibitions, fairs, festivals, national and provincial parks, Confederation Landing Park and Spinnaker's Landing. The events were professionally demonstrated by two university students and attracted over 2,500 people visiting Prince Edward Island from across Canada, the United States and Europe.

World Oceans Day

World Oceans Day is aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the importance of the oceans which surround Prince Edward Island and the marine life which inhabits them. The Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development and Fisheries and Oceans Canada has partnered for the past four years to bring a World Oceans Day event to local schools.

Students at the Tignish elementary school helped launch a series of week-long activities leading up to World Oceans Day which is celebrated annually on June 8. World Oceans Day has been designated by the United Nations to celebrate oceans and society's connection to the sea.

27th Annual West Prince Marine Show

The department co-sponsored the West Prince Marine Show. The event attracted over 34 exhibitors from across the Maritimes, who showcased their products and services to over 600 visitors. This is the event fishermen attend to learn about new fishing equipment and services to improve their businesses.

AQUACULTURE DIVISION

The division's mandate is to provide high quality advice, assistance and information to the Prince Edward Island shellfish and finfish aquaculture sectors.

The Aquaculture Division provided program assistance to support the growth and sustainability of aquaculture businesses and to encourage the adoption of new technology. As well, the division administered programs and services to support the Island's estuarine shellfish fishery. In 2009, the landed value of shellfish and finfish products such as mussels, oysters, clams and salmonids was approximately 30 million dollars. Employment in the sector was represented by more than 2,500 jobs.

The activities and programs delivered by staff in the past year were diverse including: providing technical and biological advice to the shellfish and finfish sectors, delivering a number of incentive programs that complemented technical services and assisted in the overall development of the aquaculture sector, and actively participating on several national committees and working groups, advocating for the Prince Edward Island aquaculture industry.

Mussel Monitoring Program

The Aquaculture Division has delivered an annual Mussel Monitoring Program to mussel growers since 1982. Information for the program was collected from 33 areas, representing 21 river or bay systems, which are utilized for mussel spat collection and/or grow-out. The program assisted growers in the management of their lease sites by providing information on the timing of mussel spat-fall, mussel meat yields, water quality, tunicate larvae numbers and the presence of potentially toxic algal species. The majority of the program was conducted during the ice-free season, with a focus on mussel spat-fall prediction between May and August and monitoring for potentially harmful algae, from September to December. Meat yield analysis was conducted periodically on samples collected from under the ice in the winter months.

Information collected through the Mussel Monitoring Program was communicated to industry via internet, telephone, and the annual publication available both in print and online. Please visit the mussel monitoring website at www.gov.pe.ca/go/musselmonitoring for further information.

Oyster Larvae Monitoring Program

During the summer of 2009, staff conducted an Oyster Larvae Monitoring Program. There were 16 oyster seed collection areas that were monitored, two to three times per week, from the first week of July, to the third week in August. Information on larvae size and abundance was collected and oyster spat collectors were placed at several of the major spat collection areas to monitor abundance and frequency of spat-fall. The results were reported to industry using a voicemail system, a presentation at the Island Oyster Growers Group Annual General Meeting and a summary report at year-end. Industry members use the information to determine the correct time to deploy their collectors in order to optimize the amount of oysters they collect. In addition, the program information is used to compare recruitment information from different locations around Prince Edward Island and is used both as historical data and to provide information to industry on alternate areas that can be used to collect oysters.

Aquatic Invasive Species

Since 1997, six marine aquatic invasive species have been detected in the waters surrounding Prince Edward Island. These invasive species, which are negatively impacting the shellfish industry, include the oyster thief, the green crab, the clubbed tunicate, the golden star tunicate, the violet tunicate and the vase tunicate. The mussel industry has been significantly affected by impacts from tunicate fouling on crop and equipment. The green crab has also impacted shellfish species, particularly populations of soft-shelled clams in the eastern portion of Prince Edward Island, and has also impacted the eel fishery by damaging eel nets and captured eels. Another invasive species, the oyster drill, which was introduced into Prince Edward Island waters in the early 1900's, is increasing in its population size and is impacting both cultured and wild oysters.

Field Projects Related to Aquatic Invasive Species

Staff monitored mussel production areas on a weekly basis during the ice-free season for the presence and quantity of tunicate larvae. The information collected was made available to industry to help growers manage tunicate fouling on their farms. This activity was carried out as part of the service provided to the industry through the Mussel Monitoring Program.

Staff also monitored adult populations of tunicates during the field season. The monitoring has shown that the vase tunicate (*Ciona intestinalis*) continues to be the dominant invasive species of concern in Montague River, Brudenell River, St. Mary's Bay, Murray River and Cardigan River systems. High infestation levels are also now found in Boughton River. Staff also conducted monitoring for vase tunicate in the Souris River area and closely monitored mussel seed collectors and oysters in Souris River to ensure the tunicate had not spread outside the harbour.

Mussel growers in the Darnley Basin and the March Water area of Malpeque Bay are managing large populations of the clubbed tunicate (*Styela clava*); however, populations remain light in New London Bay. The clubbed tunicate has been identified growing on oyster gear, including the oyster production areas of Foxley River (2008) and Bideford River (2007). These findings created issues with transfers of seed and market oysters from those areas.

Several of the north shore bays including Tracadie Bay, St. Peter's Bay and Savage Harbour remain heavily infested with the two colonial tunicates (*Botryllus schlosseri* and *Borrylloides violaceus*). The infestation of colonial tunicates in Nine Mile Creek area increased greatly in 2009 and impacted the ability for growers to transfer seed from this area. Staff spent time monitoring for the presence of invasive tunicates in the Rustico Bay area, where the violet tunicate was detected in 2007, but invasive tunicates have not been detected in this area for the past two years. These monitoring results were presented to the Aquatic Invasive Species Steering Committee and to the Introductions and Transfers Tunicate Subcommittee. Subsequently, Rustico has been reclassified from restricted waters to unrestricted waters, allowing for the unrestricted movement of product from this area.

In September, 2009, staff of the Aquaculture Division participated in a rapid assessment exercise for invasive tunicate species in Nine Mile Creek, which was coordinated by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The assessment was a Fisheries and Oceans Canada research initiative with the information to be used to develop a framework for the rapid response/assessment of aquatic invasive species in Canada. Charlottetown Harbour was also assessed for the presence of invasive tunicate species. All four invasive tunicates were detected within the marinas located in the Charlottetown Harbour.

Studies to determine methods to control the clubbed tunicate have shown that treatment with hydrated lime solutions are very effective and as a result, lime application is effectively used by mussel growers. Concerns regarding potential impacts of lime use on the environment and on non-target organisms, led to the development of several field studies that were conducted in 2008 and 2009. The studies measured pH changes of the water in the vicinity of lime treatment activities. The results illustrated that the pH returns to normal levels very rapidly and within meters of the primary application site. When sand shrimp and stickleback fish were placed in cages on longlines immediately following lime application and in cages beneath a liming operation, there were no mortalities or impacts observed.

Staff worked with industry members to assess tunicate control equipment that was developed through funding from **Development Fund I and II,** and the **Productivity Improvement Fund I and II**. The Development Fund I was funded by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Aquaculture Division delivered it. Development Fund II was co-funded by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development and was delivered by the Aquaculture Division. The Productivity Fund I and II were co-funded by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development, and it was delivered by the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance.

The information on the efficacy of the equipment is important to industry and to governments, as we continue to work together to determine the best tunicate management systems. Information collected on the equipment is presented to industry members at meetings and at annual tunicate workshops. A report on the equipment produced is available and a technical report on the results of the analysis of all the equipment produced from these programs is being compiled and will be available following the final field trials, which will be conducted during the 2010 field season.

The division supported a project to investigate low impact and natural treatments for invasive tunicates impacting mussel aquaculture, funded by the Aquaculture and Fisheries Research Initiative. Some of the treatments investigated included low-pressure washing, lowering socks to the bottom and buoying the socks up to the surface. The division partnered with the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance to conduct the field work, analyze the data and produce the final report.

The winter mortality rate of tunicates has been observed over the past several years in heavily infested areas. This mortality has been most pronounced in areas infested with the vase tunicate, with as high as a 95% mortality rate being observed in some cases. The quantity of mortality appears to be dependent on the severity and length of the winter weather conditions. Staff collaborated with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Atlantic Veterinary College, to monitor winter mortality and worked to determine the probable cause(s).

It was previously established through projects conducted by staff of the Aquaculture Division, that an appropriate mitigation response to minimize the potential risk of transferring colonial tunicates from an infested area to an area free of colonial tunicates is to immerse the seed to be transferred in flow-through freshwater for a period of 24 hours. At the request of the Aquatic Invasive Species Steering Committee, a study was conducted to determine if reduced freshwater exposure would have the same effect on the tunicates. Staff experimented with a six hour exposure at an industry treatment scale, however, a small amount of colonial tunicates remained viable following the freshwater treatment. It is planned to repeat this experiment, with a 12 hour freshwater exposure, to determine if the time can be reduced from 24 hours to 12 hours.

The division conducted a trapping survey to determine the distribution of the green crab (*Carcinus maenas*) in Prince Edward Island waters. The green crab is prevalent in the bays and rivers in Eastern Prince Edward Island and has increased their distribution along the north shore to include Covehead Bay, Tracadie Bay and Southwest River. This species has been detected, as far west as Egmont Bay on the south shore. The size of the population of this species continues to increase, especially in the eastern portion of the province. The green crab is an aggressive crab that preys on bivalve molluscans and other crustaceans.

Funding, Committees and Working Groups Related to Aquatic Invasive Species

Staff of the Aquaculture Division, have been active members on the **Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers Task Group on Aquatic Invasive Species**. In 2009, the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers, transitioned the Task Group to a permanent **National Aquatic Invasive Species Committee**, with a mandate to work on national initiatives related to aquatic invasive species. In October of 2009, staff attended the first National Aquatic Invasive Species Committee meeting in Halifax. The committee will meet regularly to address national aquatic invasive species issues, such as public awareness and communication and will report back to the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers on an annual basis.

Division staff are members on the **Introductions and Transfers Committee** and the **Introductions and Transfers Tunicate Subcommittee**, which are both chaired by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The Introductions and Transfers Committee makes decisions on the introductions and transfers of aquatic organisms being placed into Prince Edward Island waters. The Introductions and Transfers Tunicate Subcommittee provides advice to the Introductions and Transfers Committee on issues around restrictions placed on shellfish transfers, as a result of tunicate infestations. The purpose of the

restrictions is to prevent or slow the spread of tunicate species that may occur, as a result of the shellfish transfers.

The Aquaculture Division also participated on the **Aquatic Invasive Species Steering Committee**, along with staff from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, academia and industry members. The committee meets to provide direction for communication, monitoring and research activities related to aquatic invasive species on Prince Edward Island, and to provide support to the Introductions and Transfers Committee.

As well, staff are members of the **Atlantic Zone Aquatic Invasive Species Research Committee**, chaired by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which provides direction to Fisheries and Oceans Canada Science Branch on their research activities and monitoring programs.

Staff also represented Atlantic Canada, along with the Executive Director of the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance, as members of the **Board of Directors for the Canadian Aquatic Invasive Species Network**. This board provides direction on funding for research projects related to aquatic invasive species, under the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. Several projects have been funded in Atlantic Canada on aquatic invasive species through this network.

The department partnered with Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Atlantic Veterinary College and industry, to provide funding and to set direction for a research project under the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency's Atlantic Innovation Fund. The project involved the development of techniques and mitigation strategies for invasive tunicate species fouling mussel farms. The project was awarded to the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance and the research for the project was conducted by the Atlantic Veterinary College. As part of this project, the division was involved in a study to look at the potential of utilizing cavitating nozzles under water to remove the vase tunicate from mussels.

Study to Reduce Barnacle Fouling on Oysters

Oyster producers requested that the department work with them to determine if there was a method to control barnacle fouling on market oysters. Their oysters received a very heavy set of barnacles in the summer of 2009. Staff developed a project to compare several methods that could potentially remove the fouling barnacles. It was concluded that immersing the oysters in hot water (60°C) for 12 seconds was the best solution. An Aqua-Info note is being developed to describe the trials and results.

Oyster Shellbed Cultivation Project

Staff conducted trials over the past four years, in partnership with the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association, to assess the impact of shellbed cultivation on wild oyster beds in West River. Cultivation has been considered beneficial to enhance oyster spat settlement, by exposing the clean shell for the oyster larvae to settle on. The aim of these trials was to explore the effectiveness of cultivation of oyster beds on spat collection and to determine if there were any negative impacts on the wild oysters. Assessment of these trials will continue into the 2010/2011 fiscal year.

Evaluation of Oyster Relay

Staff collaborated with the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association to determine appropriate locations for the relay of juvenile oysters and to determine the growth and performance of the relayed oysters. The relay of one and two year old juvenile oysters to public oyster beds is an important part of the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association's Oyster Enhancement Program. Staff deployed juvenile

oysters in the spring of 2008 at several test-site locations. Over the summer and fall of 2009, the oysters were collected, measured and re-deployed. The project will continue over the next couple of years, until the oysters reach market size and will determine growth and mortality rates.

Investigating Potential Technology for Sea Lettuce Harvest

The division provided funding for members of the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association to travel to Ontario, to investigate potential technology for harvesting sea lettuce. Members from the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association met with an equipment manufacturer to discuss the sea lettuce problem and investigate their harvest equipment for potential use in Prince Edward Island estuaries.

Assessment of Sea Duck Predation on Cultured Mussels

The division provided funding to the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance to bring Dr. Podolsky to the province to provide an assessment of the sea duck predation on cultured mussels and to evaluate the control methods currently being used by industry. Dr. Podolsky is an expert in bird behaviour and he provided the Alliance with a report and several recommendations on potential improvements to control the activities that are in use.

Oyster Diseases – Multinucleated Sphere Unknown (MSX) and Seaside Organism (SSO)

Aquaculture staff continued to work closely with officials from Fisheries and Oceans Canada to monitor oyster stocks throughout Prince Edward Island, for the presence of MSX and SSO parasites. MSX was identified in the Bras D'or Lakes, Nova Scotia in 2002, but has never been identified in Prince Edward Island oysters. SSO was found in Island oysters in 2002, at non-threatening levels and has not been detected since. Importing oysters from MSX positive areas in Nova Scotia is prohibited by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Staff also responds to any reports of shellfish mortalities and plays an active role in partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, to investigate the causes of the mortalities.

Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program

Division staff assisted the federal partners responsible for the delivery of the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program, when required. Staff are members of the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Working Group and the Atlantic Region Interdepartmental Shellfish Committee, where issues related to the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program and closures as a result of potential contamination, are discussed. The Aquaculture Division is also represented on the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers Committee that discuss national issues the Canadian Food Inspection Agency works on, including issues related to the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program. Staff routinely assist in sample collection to ensure areas that become closed due to potential contamination, may be reopened as quickly as possible.

Conditional Shellfish Openings

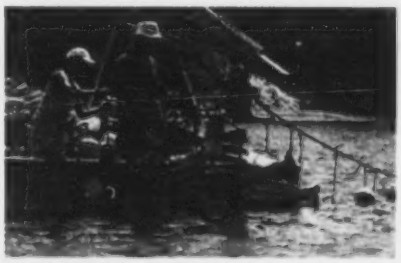
Over the past several years, the division has collected water and shellfish samples to ensure that shellfish from the Vernon-Orwell River System and the Souris River system can be harvested on a conditional basis. In 2009, staff continued to work with shellfish leaseholders in these two river systems to maintain conditional openings for the harvest of oysters, quahaugs and clams. The conditional openings were a joint effort of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment Canada, the department and affected shellfish growers.

Precautionary Closure for Shellfish Harvest in August 2009

In August 2009, the federal partners responsible for the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program placed an unprecedented Island-wide, closure for the harvest of shellfish as a result of an extreme weather event. There was an excess of 100 millimetres of rain over a very short period of time. Division staff worked with federal partners and industry, both in the field collecting samples and also, in discussions on the requirements to have the closure lifted as quickly as possible. Staff continue to work with the industry and federal Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program partners in planning, in the event that a closure like this is necessary in the future. Discussions are ongoing to find methods to lessen impacts and improve communication.

Assistance Programs

Two incentive programs, the Aquaculture Technology Program and the Aquaculture Environmental Practices Program, were delivered by the division to the aquaculture sector. Three projects were approved under the Aquaculture Technology Program, representing a government contribution of $29,500 and three projects were approved under the Environmental Practices Program, representing a government contribution of $21,883. These programs assisted the industry to evaluate new technologies and improve the environmental sustainability of their aquaculture operations.



A total of $100,000 was approved for the Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association to carry out oyster enhancement activities on public fishing grounds. Projects included seed collection, oyster relays and shell spreading. Each project is carried out with the goal to either improve oyster quality or increase the acreage of public oyster grounds. The Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association cost-shared the oyster enhancement activities and delivered the program with technical assistance from staff of the Aquaculture Division. The long term commitment of the department to the enhancement of the public oyster fishery has resulted in increased landings and opportunities for oyster fishers.

The division continued to support the Atlantic Veterinary College's Shellfish Aquaculture Research Program. A contribution by the division provided the Atlantic Veterinary College with the necessary infrastructure and research support to attract funding and conduct research projects identified by, and relevant to the Island shellfish industry.

Aquaculture Leasing Program

The divison continued its partnership with the aquaculture industry, to provide management advice to Fisheries and Oceans Canada for delivery of the Aquaculture Leasing Program. The division has membership on the Lease Management Board, which oversees development of work plans, financial plans, and the policy framework of the program. The division was also represented on the Leasing Referral Committee and provided advice on applications for new aquaculture sites and other transactions. Under the Aquaculture Leasing Program, Fisheries and Oceans Canada makes the final decision on leasing matters, however, the industry and province have a role in management decisions. All parties contribute financially to the program.

Adaptive Management - Environmental Monitoring Program

Staff from the Aquaculture Division are members of the Adaptive Management Committee that reports to the Lease Management Board. The Committee is chaired by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Habitat Division) and includes representation from the aquaculture industry. The purpose of this committee is to respond to emerging issues in the aquaculture industry and provide solutions, as necessary. Staff, in collaboration with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and industry, drafted the framework for an Environmental Monitoring Program for the aquaculture industry. The monitoring program is expected to be implemented in 2010.

National Aquatic Animal Health Program

The National Aquatic Animal Health Program is a fish health program, designed to protect Canadian farmed and wild fish stocks and Canadian export markets. The development of the National Aquatic Animal Health Program is being led by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, in cooperation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Staff has participated in consultations on regulatory changes to the *Health of Animals Act* that are required by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to manage the program. Although the Canadian Food Inspection Agency is currently active with fish health issues, the new regulations are not expected to be in place until 2010/2011. Staff also participated on the National Aquatic Animal Health Committee, which provides input to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for the program development. Staff has been involved in consultations regarding surveillance and program development, with more planned for 2010. For more information on the National Aquatic Animal Health Program, please visit: www.inspection.gc.ca/english/direct/naahp .

Sustainable Aquaculture Program

The division worked with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and other provinces under the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers, in the development of the federally funded Sustainable Aquaculture Program, for the Canadian aquaculture industry. Fisheries and Oceans Canada announced $70 million in funding for the program, which is to be delivered over a five-year period and is directed to regulatory reform and governance, regulatory science (to support regulations), innovation(reduction of production costs, industry competitiveness, new species and green technology), and product certification.

Staff of the Aquaculture Division are active members on the Strategic Management Committee, which provides Fisheries and Oceans Canada with input on this program and other matters related to aquaculture.

National Aquaculture Strategic Action Planning Initiative

Fisheries and Oceans Canada began the development of the National Aquaculture Strategic Action Planning Initiative, with the mandate to develop a plan for the further development of aquaculture in Canada. This planning initiative will identify and develop plans to address the strategic initiatives that are required by the Canadian industry for further development. Division staff are working closely with the Prince Edward Island industry, to identify priorities for the industry and to ensure that they will be included, as part of the National Aquaculture Strategic Action Planning Initiative. The development of this initiative falls under the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers Strategic Management Committee for aquaculture.

Memorandum of Agreement on Aquaculture in Atlantic Canada

In 2008, provincial Ministers responsible for the development of aquaculture in Atlantic Canada, signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work cooperatively to develop aquaculture in Atlantic Canada. Issues that will be addressed under the memorandum include aquatic invasive species, fish health management, coordination in research and development, investment in aquaculture, regional marketing and promotion, training, education and harmonization of regulations. Division staff are members of an Atlantic Canada committee that is working to address the priorities identified under the Memorandum of Understanding.

Chilean Delegation Visits Prince Edward Island

In August 2009, a group of scientists and regulators from Chile visited Prince Edward Island. Staff from the Aquaculture Division toured with the group to a variety of finfish and shellfish facilities including the Food Technology Centre and the Atlantic Veterinary College. The group met with a variety of Canadian industry members, scientists, equipment manufacturers and regulators.

Shellfish Aquaculture Environmental Code of Practice

The PEI Shellfish Environmental Code of Practice was developed in 2002 by the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance, with input from government, industry and academia. Over 280 individual growers have signed onto the code of practice to confirm their commitment towards farming shellfish in an environmentally sustainable and responsible manner. A formal review was conducted on the code of practice in 2010 by the Prince Edward Island Aquaculture Alliance with support from the department.

World Wildlife Fund - Bivalve Aquaculture Dialogue

The aquaculture industry on Prince Edward Island has considered the concept of adapting certification standards for their products. The World Wildlife Fund has initiated a bivalve aquaculture dialogue at the global scale to develop a set of standards. Industry, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the department have been supportive of this process. The Aquaculture Division has been involved in this process by providing the World Wildlife Fund with presentations, gathering background information and providing rough estimates on how well Island industries are situated to undergo the certification process. The standards are still in draft form and the review is ongoing.

12th International Conference on Shellfish Restoration

The 12th International Conference on Shellfish Restoration was held on Prince Edward Island in September, 2009. The Department co-hosted the conference with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The Prince Edward Island Shellfish Association was the conference sponsor. Aquaculture staff played an important role in the organization of the conference. There were approximately 200 participants, with international experts in attendance, presenting the latest information on shellfish restoration.

The department recognized Clyde MacKenzie, by presenting him with a Recognition Award for the excellent work that he conducted in Prince Edward Island in the 1970's. Mr. MacKenzie developed many of the techniques that are currently being used in the Oyster Enhancement Program today and his work was significant in developing the industry.

Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Deputy Ministers

The Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Deputy Ministers met on June 11, 2009 in Brudenell, Prince Edward Island. Deputy Minister Richard Gallant co-chaired the meeting with Claire Dansereau, Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The agenda included the recognition of the 10th anniversary of the Agreement on Interjurisdictional Cooperation with Respect to Fisheries and Aquaculture, maximizing the value of aquatic resources and task group and committee issues and recommendations on oceans, eco-certification, traceability, and aquaculture. The objective of the meeting was to prepare for the Ministers' meeting on October 15, 2009.

Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (CCFAM)

The Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers' Meeting was held on October 15, 2009 in Mill River, Prince Edward Island. The 2009 CCFAM theme was **Maximizing the Value of Aquatic Resources**. The Honourable Neil LeClair, Minister of the Prince Edward Island Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development co-chaired the meeting with the Honourable Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. CCFAM Ministers discussed the need to balance competing interests in aquatic resources and requested further information on options for allocating property rights to a common property resource as a means to ensure both economic viability and sustainability. Ministers also approved the task group work plans for 2009/2010, as well as recommendations to establish the new Aquaculture Committee.

Atlantic Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (ACFAM)

The Atlantic Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers met on October 16, 2009, following the meeting of the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers in O'Leary, Prince Edward Island. The meeting was chaired by the Honourable Neil LeClair, Minister of the Prince Edward Island Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development and the Honourable Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Discussions at the meeting included fish health and management of aquaculture in Canada, an update on the Canadian Shellfish and Sanitation Program, a progress report on federal-provincial efforts to support the Atlantic lobster industry through the economic downturn, and the agreement to establish a Deputy Ministers' Committee to address issues regarding seals.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The division's mandate is to provide quality advice, assistance and information to rural clients and develop new approaches to community development and delivery of employment programs.

In the 2008 Speech from the Throne, entitled "One Island Community, One Island Future," the provincial government declared its intention to form a new department responsible for rural development and to produce a rural economic development strategy. Both the department and the strategy would be the first of their kind for Prince Edward Island. Islanders would participate in a consultative process to develop the plan.

In April, 2009 at the Provincial Conference on Rural Development, the government released a discussion paper called *Renewing Rural Prince Edward Island*. The discussion paper served as the technical foundation of the Rural Action Plan.

In late June of the same year, the Rural Economic Development Advisory Council was formed to participate in the consultation and to advise the Minister responsible for rural development regarding rural economic development issues, with a focus on the on-going implementation of the strategy as it was developed.

Over 1,200 Islanders participated in consultations, which took place between July and October, 2009. In July, regional consultations were held in Mill River, Crapaud, and Montague, in addition, a French-language consultation was held in Wellington. Over 200 people, representing private interests, sector organizations and development groups, attended the four sessions. During the same timeframe, the government conducted an on-line survey that had responses from over 600 participants. Seven sector workshops were held from September to October 2009 with participation from industry organizations. As a result, the *Rural Action Plan – A Rural Economic Development Strategy for Prince Edward Island* represents the culmination of these efforts. The plan sets out 40 Actions intended to focus on existing and new efforts to develop the rural economy.

Seven Broad Goals Intended to Fulfill the Aims of the Plan

✓	Goal 1	To create a sound basis for rural businesses to grow, for new ones to be formed and new sectors to emerge.
✓	Goal 2	To enable the growth of innovative, competitive and sustainable primary sectors, in order to ensure that they remain pillars of the rural economy and community for generations to come.
✓	Goal 3	To augment rural areas of Prince Edward Island as tourist destinations; to expand and grow products, such as festivals and events, that complement the primary sectors and strengthen local culture, while increasing visitations Island-wide.
✓	Goal 4	To improve the balance between the growth and health of primary industries and rural communities with the need for environmental conservation.
✓	Goal 5	To invest in community development efforts and to strengthen community-based capacities.
✓	Goal 6	To invest in education and the development of human resources in order to create opportunities, strengthen the base of Island industries and to share – to the fullest extent possible – the benefits of the "One Island Community" principle.
✓	Goal 7	To increase development investments in areas of greatest need in order to stimulate growth and opportunity.

In order to have full implementation of the plan, the provincial government of Prince Edward Island established Rural Development PEI – consisting of all the ministers of all the departments responsible for the Rural Action Plan. The Minister of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development will act as chair for RDPEI. A committee of Deputy Ministers was established to provide senior policy development assistance regarding rural issues on a government-wide basis.

The *Rural Action Plan* was launched on January 26, 2010 in the community of Tignish. Community groups, participants of the consultations and industry leaders were invited to attend the release of the plan. Some initiatives were implemented between the months for February and March of 2010 such as Action 4 from the *Rural Action Plan*. This action item *Championing Island-Wide Rural Broadband,* was the first priority for rural Prince Edward Island. By January of 2010 every island home had access to high-speed internet service. The rest of the actions will commence in April of 2010.

To review the full Rural Action Plan, please visit: www.gov.pe.ca/go/ruralactionplan.

Employment Development Agency

The Employment Development Agency contributed to labour force development through short term job creation, wage subsidy, and employment matching. Financial resources, available through the Employment Development Agency, assisted non profit organizations and private businesses to provide jobs for summer students and matched those that have employment challenges with jobs. A separate annual report of the Employment Development Agency provides the details on these activities.

Programs

Community Development Fund

The Community Development Fund contributed to initiatives which helped to strengthen local communities. Sustainable projects which had a high degree of community involvement were assisted. Community involvement was measured in a variety of ways such as volunteers who contribute their time and/or expertise, fund raising monetary contributions via local businesses and organizations, and arranging multiple funding partnerships.

Approved contributions in 2009/2010 were $856,748 and assisted 50 projects across the Island. These projects had a total monetary value of over $7 million.

Major capital improvements were planned and completed in various communities across Prince Edward Island.

Island Community Fund

The responsibility for the Island Community Fund was transferred to the department in January 2010 from the former Department of Communities, Cultural Affairs and Labour. Rural Development will be administering the six-year, $27.5 million Island Community Fund to invest in the infrastructure needs of rural communities.

Regional Development Support Program

This program assisted community based development organizations in various locations across the Island. Assistance accommodated essential gap funding in support of planning and sustaining community initiatives.

Contributions in 2009/2010 were $150,328 and shared among 16 approved projects and financial assistance requests to support studies, assist planning and develop organization's business or economic plans.

Community Capacity Fund

The Community Capacity Fund supported leadership development in community areas and enabled volunteers to plan development initiatives at the local level. Organizations were assisted with professional services, volunteer training, incorporation fees, newsletters, annual meetings and forums, surveys, business or design plans, and development strategies.

Total approved contributions under the program were $45,512 which assisted 24 requests.

Seasonal Hiring Centre

The Seasonal Hiring Center assists the various government departments in filling seasonal employment vacancies. The Centre advises departments on proper hiring procedures and manages an employee selection and referral service.

The Seasonal Hiring Centre assisted with the staffing of 143 positions during this report period.

ACCESS PEI

Access PEI's mission statement is to provide high quality and efficient delivery of provincial government services to rural and urban clients.

Access PEI was created in February 2003 under the Department of Development and Technology. It became a part of the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development in May 2008.

The purpose of the division is to provide quality services to Islanders through single window access to government programs, services and information in person or on the telephone. Islanders also access information through several hundred thousand telephone calls that are received and handled on an annual basis.

At Access PEI, customers have access to over 300 government services including: payment of property taxes; remittance of sales tax; renewing drivers licences; renewing vehicle registrations; obtaining marriage licences; obtaining fishing licences; and availability of government job application forms.

Access PEI is the public face of government throughout Prince Edward Island providing Islanders with access to provincial government programs and services on behalf of all government departments. The division also provides administrative support to other provincial government departments within the eight sites.

There are eight Access PEI sites that provide a full range of government services to Islanders.	
Tignish	Summerside
Alberton	Charlottetown
O'Leary	Montague
Wellington	Souris

Work has continued on the development of a next phase of a comprehensive computer system that will make it easier for staff to deliver the Highway Safety programs and services. The intent of the system is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Access PEI's operations by providing staff with the detailed information on the steps required to deliver various programs and services. The project is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2010.

Staff training is continuously offered to ensure employees are familiar with the procedures involved in the delivery of programs and services. On an annual basis, the Director of Access PEI meets with other departmental directors responsible for the programs and services delivered by Access PEI on behalf of his/her department. This is a valuable tool in providing feedback to the departments for which Access PEI delivers services.